

## Judges 16 - Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

(1) Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her.

- Right out of the shoot here in verse one we are off to a horrible start for a number of reasons not the least of which is that he goes to Gaza.
- The reason being is that Samson has no business going to a place that represents an environment conducive to both temptation and sin.
- This is a man that is so strong physically, and supernaturally, that he can kill a lion with his bare hands, but his flesh is weak with women.

Romans 13:13-14 NKJV Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

(14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

(2) When the Gazites *were told*, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded *the place* and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, "In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him." (3) And Samson lay *low* till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put *them* on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

- There are some who believe that Samson may have carried these gateposts thirty-seven miles, which would have made it quite a feat.
- However, this begs the question of why it is that God would still grant him this supernatural strength subsequent to his horrendous sin.
- I'm of the belief that it's because God is still overruling Samson's sins so as to accomplish His purpose and plan to deliver the Israelites.

(4) Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name *was* Delilah.

- It's interesting to note how that we're told Samson loved her. The reason I point this out is that the text doesn't say he loved his first wife.
- The reason I find this interesting is it would seem to indicate how "afterward" it happened over a period of time that he falls in love with her.
- I would suggest Delilah had heard about Samson, and as such she pursued him, to his own peril, in order to get him to fall in love with her.

Proverbs 6:26 KJV For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

(5) And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and find out where his great strength *lies*, and by what *means* we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred *pieces* of silver."

- It's because of verse five that we know Samson's strength was supernatural and not natural by virtue of the fact that they didn't know.
- In other words, were his strength outward in the natural, in that it was evidenced by his muscular physic, they wouldn't have to bribe her.
- Also, there's an ironic paradox in all of this in that they threaten Samson's first wife concerning the riddle, but they bribe his second wife.

(6) So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."

- Did Delilah just tell Samson the reason why she wanted to know the source of his strength was so that they could bind and torture him?
- Lest we be too critical of both her and Samson, we would do well to realize that often times a similar scenario plays out in our lives as well.
- By that I mean, the enemy hunts us and preys on us so as to bind and afflict us if we falter in the strength God has given us to resist him.

(7) And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man." (8) So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. (9) Now *men were* lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

- You would think that after Samson realized that she was betraying him concerning the source of his strength, he would have fled from her.
- Instead he sticks around and plays games by intentionally deceiving her only to have them attempt to bind him so they can torture him.
- Why? I believe the reason is that ungodly relationships can have such a devastating affect on our lives spiritually driving us to foolishness.

Charles Spurgeon - "After this deliverance Samson had no excuse for further remaining in traitorous company. 'Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird,' but this man was so infatuated that he plunged in the snare after he had once narrowly escaped from it. Sin is madness."

(10) Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with." (11)

So he said to her, "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man." (12) Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" And *men were* lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.

- The only explanation that I can come up with to wrap my mind around why it is that Samson doesn't flee is that he is already bound by sin.
- What I mean by that is, he played around with sin thinking that he had everything under control when in fact sin had him under its control.
- I suppose you could say that he's past the point of no return in his downward spiral, such that now it's only a matter of time before he falls.

Charles Spurgeon - "A second time betrayed! A second time delivered! Will he not fly now from the deceiver's house? Alas! No. You might sooner teach a moth to shun the candle than a man besotted by sin to escape from its wiles."

(13) Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom"— (14) So she wove *it* tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.

- Pardon the pun but Samson is just a hair away from his downfall by virtue of how he gets dangerously close to the source of his strength.
- It's actually really sad if you think about it. However, Samson has done this to himself, in that he is now about to reap that which he sowed.
- It's been said that the ruthlessness of sin requires us to have a ruthlessness with sin. Sadly, Samson has played around with sin too long.

You'll forgive me for quoting Spurgeon so much tonight, but I think he says it best when he writes; "This time he came dangerously near his secret. The whirlpool in which he was surging was sucking him down. Poor Samson! Who could save thee when thou wast determined to destroy thyself?"

(15) Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart *is* not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength *lies*." (16) And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, (17) that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I *have been* a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

- I can't get over why it is that Delilah is sort of "hell bent" on Samson's destruction. By that I mean, that she is doing because of the money.
- Make no mistake about it, she is about to get an enormous amount of money, which tells me that she's doing this evil for the love of money.
- It's ironic in a way that she would accuse Samson of not loving her, all the while she does not love him. She can't, she loves money more.

1 Timothy 6:10 NKJV For the love of money is a root of all *kinds* of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

- By the way, it's important to note that the hair in and of itself wasn't the source of his strength rather, it was the Holy Spirit vis-à-vis the vow.
- In a way, Samson had grieved the Spirit of God so much so that the Holy Spirit ceased in His striving with Samson for what is the last time.

Genesis 6:3 NKJV And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

(18) When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. (19) Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. (20) And she said, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

- I want to point out three things here that are not so visible at first glance, the first of which is that sin personified in Delilah lulls us to sleep.
- The second one is, after sin lulls us to sleep, it then torments us to the degree in which the strength of the Holy Spirit will leave us weak.
- The third one is that sin deceives us into thinking that our willful disobedience must not be a big deal because God continues to anoint us.

(21) Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison.

- Believe it or not there are actually three more things here that sin does to us in the sense that sin blinds, sin binds and ultimately sin grinds.
- More specifically, sin blinds us to the pain and suffering of the consequences, such that we think the pleasure of it will continue to last.
- Then once the bitterness of that sin blinds us, it binds us in that we are in bondage to it, which leads to how sin grinds us down to nothing.

(22) However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven. (23) Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!" (24) When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead."

- I think we'd be grossly remiss were we to not notice that while his hair grew back again, he would never have his eye sight back again.
- Sometimes God will restore us but there are other times that sin will tax such a heavy toll that some things can never be restored again.
- Yes God is the God of endless chances in so much that we'll now see how that God will give Samson a second chance in restoring him.

(25) So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. (26) Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them." (27) Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines *were* there—about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed. (28) Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one *blow* take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" (29) And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. (30) Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with *all his* might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who *were* in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life. (31) And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought *him* up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a bit as we bring this chapter to an end, because there are a few things I want to draw your attention to.
- First, this is only the second time that we have any record that Samson prayed in all the twenty years that he was a Judge over Israel.
- The lesson here becomes quite clear in that a life of prayerlessness will doubtless give way to a life that's riddled with overt sinfulness.

- Another lesson we can learn from Samson's life is how that it can be unspeakably perilous for us to play games with God's call on our life.
- In other words, to not take seriously the call of God on my life is to waste my life, such that I thwart the will and call God had for my life.
- Lastly, and perhaps more importantly, Samson's life teaches me that no matter how much I've lost because of sin's cost, God is merciful.